REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-8 are pending.

The Examiner's withdrawal of the rejection based on U.S. Patent No. 6,929,481 (Alexander) is noted with appreciation.

In the present action, claims 1-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by GB 2,252,656 (Miller et al.).

All rejections are respectfully traversed.

Avoidance of Piecemeal Examination

M.P.E.P. 707.07(g) states, in pertinent part:

> Piecemeal examination should be avoided as much as possible. The examiner ordinarily should reject each claim on all valid grounds available, avoiding, however, undue multiplication of references

The present action represents the third Office Action in this case. The previous two Office Actions each involved a prior art rejection involving a single reference, the Alexander patent. The latest GB 2 252 656 reference was previously made of record by Applicants. Given that there have been no substantive changes to claim 1 during prosecution, the Examiner believes the GB 2 252 656 reference to represent a Section 102(b) reference, and only one reference was previously cited, it is respectfully submitted that the spirit of M.P.E.P. 707.07(g) is not being followed in the present examination.

GB 2 252 656 does not anticipate the claims

It is respectfully submitted that while GB 2 252 656 discloses the first few features of claim 1, namely the control body, angulation control, insertion tube and umbilical, it discloses none of the remaining features as set out below:

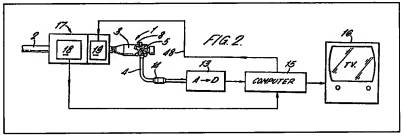
GB 2 252 656 does not disclose "at least one angulation cable extending from the user manipulatable angulation control, and down the umbilical" as required by claim 1. In GB 2 252 656, cables 9 and 10 extend a short distance within the control body. However, they extend towards insertion tube 2 and away from the umbilical 4. The Examiner appears to have correctly

identified insertion tube 2, umbilical 4 and cables 9 and 10. However, cables 9, 10 do not extend down the umbilical 4.

Claim 1 requires "a motor within the instrument at the distal end of the umbilical to apply a variable force to the cable". The Examiner identifies the motor 45 as representing this motor. This is incorrect for a number of reasons.

Firstly, the motor 45 has nothing to do with angulation force feedback. Instead, the motor 45 operates the frictional brake 38 which provides "resistance to both longitudinal and rotational motion of the insertion tube 2 to the operator who is manually manipulating the dummy endoscope 1" (page 11, lines 6 to 10). By contrast, angulation force feedback is provided by the potentiometers 11 and 12 in the angulation control. This motor therefore fails to meet all of the claim requirements.

For example, the motor 45 is not "within the instrument at the distal end of the umbilical". As identified by the Examiner, the umbilical terminates at connector 14. By contrast, the motor 45 identified by the Examiner is within the fixture 17. This can be seen in Fig. 2 which shows a clear separation between the umbilical 4 and the fixture 17 so that the motor 45 cannot possibly be "within the instrument at a distal end of the umbilical".



It is further incapable of being able to "apply a variable force to the cable". The cable in question is the angulation cable extending from the angulation control down the umbilical. As set out above, no such cable is disclosed in GB 2 252 656. Instead, motor 45 applies a force to the frictional brake 38 as set out above. This is an entirely independent mechanism from the angulation force feedback control and the cables 9, 10 as set out above.

In relation to the position of the detector within the instrument to detect an angular position of the angulation control, this is not disclosed in GB 2 252 656. The Examiner has referred to the shaft encoders on page 8, line 27 to page 9, line 11 as providing such limitation. As previously explained to the Examiner in addressing the rejection based on Alexander, force feedback applied to the insertion tube and angulation force feedback are wholly different and, recognizing this difference, it will be appreciated that the cited shaft encoders do not meet the claim requirements for the position detector element.

Reconsideration and issuance of a Notice of Allowance is requested. In the event this response is not timely filed, Applicants hereby petition for the appropriate extension of time and request that the fee for the extension along with any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper be charged to our **Deposit Account No. 12-2355.**

Respectfully submitted,

LUEDEKA, NEELY & GRAHAM, P.C.

By: 

Robert O. Fox
Registration No. 34,165

July 27, 2011
P. O. Box 1871
Knoxville, TN 37901
Phone (865) 546-4305
Fax (865) 523-4478
Email: RFOX@LNG-PATENT.COM